



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 6 • February 13, 2009



IM Finance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana (IM) Finance Committee met in Helena on Mon., Feb. 9. After the minutes were approved, a review of task items was conducted. Scott Bradford, Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB), announced that the snow cat will be delivered to Billings on Thurs., Feb. 12.

Members discussed FY05 grant monies and agreed to recommend to the IM Project Directors that a grant extension be requested for them. Participants also reviewed and affirmed the plan for the FY09 Dept. of Homeland Security grant funding request.

Committee members reviewed the five-year projected budget. Bill Fleiner clarified that all salaries include a benefit package, and he said the IMPD will need to adopt a budget this spring to take effect on July 1. The group also discussed options for tracking soft matches for the PSIC grant. Irene Bushnell, AZ, reported that she is tracking soft matches when local representatives attend IM meetings in Helena, but ideas are needed for obtaining information on soft matches at a local level. A reporting form will be developed.

The committee approved Decision/Information Request (DIR) 122, which addresses re-mobilization of a Harris-Stratex crew to Fort Harrison to complete the microwave path to the Stark Armory. The path is needed to allow the monitoring software to work. The committee also approved payment of some frequency invoices.

Scott Bradford, PSSB, reported on the COPS grant, and indicated that he will be working on transfer-of-ownership documents to transfer ownership of subscriber units from the Dept. of Administration, ITSD, to local jurisdictions. Kevin Bruski, IM Executive Director, reiterated the need for a comprehensive list of Northern Tier radios that are trunking capable, but have not yet been upgraded to trunking. This information needs to be sent to Wing Spooner no later than Feb. 20.

The next Finance Committee meeting is set for Mon., March 9 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), 828 Great Northern Blvd. in Helena.

IM Governance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The IM Governance Committee met in Helena on Mon., Feb. 9. Cheri Kilby was named as the new chair of the bylaws sub-committee, and Peggy Glass was assigned as a member. George Gupton reported on the staffing sub-committee, indicating that Roger Smith has accepted the Radio System Administrator position, and negotiations are pending for the Project Manager positions. Dave McPherson was named as the new chair of the business practices and fleet mapping sub-committee, whose mission will be to work on Standard Operating Procedures.

Bill Fleiner reported that the City of Billings and Yellowstone County have agreed to work on a needs assessment. Kerry O'Connell announced her resignation as the training sub-committee chair. She will remain on the Governance Committee. She announced two sets of dates set for the next Fleet Mapping training: March 2-4 or March 9-11. Probable METNET sites are: Bozeman, Butte, Glasgow and Great Falls.

Bill indicated that comments are being compiled on the Sustainability Plan and plans are to hold a series of public meetings. Kerry, Cheri and Ed have volunteered to review and prioritize all the comments received thus far.

Bill also said that the Hearing on HB 10 went well. Only proponents and informational testimony was heard. Some opposing correspondence was noted. Work continues on a number of Memoranda of Understanding. Planning began for a display booth at an upcoming HAZMAT conference and possibly a meeting of public works employees.

The next IM Governance Committee meeting will be on Mon., March 9, at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), 828 Great Northern Blvd. in Helena.

IM Project Directors Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) held its monthly meeting in Helena on Tues., Feb. 10. Kevin Bruski presented the Executive Director update and reported that the eastern portion of the Northern Tier microwave system is up and running with no errors all the way to Roosevelt County. It is in the final stages of testing. The western portion of the Northern Tier is also up and running, and some technical issues are expected to be rectified in early March.

Carl Hotvedt, Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) Acting Bureau Chief, reported on House Bill 10 and the \$2 million allocation to the IM. The hearing took place Feb. 2, and executive action is scheduled for Feb. 13.

Kevin announced that Roger Smith has accepted the IM Radio System Administrator position and will begin on March 2. Kevin also explained the FY09 Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) funding request. The IM Project is requesting \$2.8 million to continue infrastructure build-out in eastern Montana; \$1.2 million to upgrade two PSAP's, (in central and eastern Montana); and, \$220,000 for a two year communications planner position as well as office and travel costs.

Chief Michaels reported on IMPD Executive Committee decision making, noting that DIR 121 to acquire a server for the ProVision software was approved. He also reported that during the conference call on the Sustainability Plan, the IMPD voted to refer the plan back to the IM Governance Committee for further review and to hold public meetings.

Members heard reports from the IM Finance and Governance Committees, and voted in support of a



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request to extend FY05 and FY06 DHS grant funds. The IMPD also approved payment for APCO frequency invoices and DIR 122 to re-mobilize a Harris-Stratex crew to Fort Harrison.

Bill Fleiner reviewed the draft five-year budget and Irene Bushnell, Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ), presented financial reports and indicated that work is proceeding on reporting in-kind soft matches for PSIC grant dollars. Bill announced that Cheri Kilby, CMICC, will chair the Bylaws sub-committee and Dave McPherson, I-15/90, will chair the business practices and fleet mapping sub-committee. Bill also reported that work is starting on a needs assessment for the City of Billings and Yellowstone County.

Kerry O'Connell, training sub-committee chair, announced two alternative fleet mapping training dates: either March 2-4 or March 10-12. Input from instructors is still pending. Scott Bradford, contract management sub-committee chair, reported that March 1 is the targeted close-out date for the Harris-Stratex microwave contract with the exception of some equipment variances.

David Hinds provided the U.S. Air Force (USAF) report, and indicated that Maelstrom Air Force Base has received its radio equipment for all sites. He also reported that they are close to finalizing an agreement with the SIEC. Constance Taylor, Northrop Grumman, reported on a Remote Video Access (RVA) project with the USAF. Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, provided an update on Northern Tier trunking and Coverage Acceptance Testing. He also reported that the mobile data needs assessment work plan has been updated, and a questionnaire has been completed and sent out.

Bob McWilliams, IM Technical Committee (IMTC) Chair, said the IMTC has completed development of its five-year build-out plan and made a recommendation for the location of the second master controller, selecting the new Autovon site near Glendive. The IMPD heard reports from the frequency, network and encryption sub-committees. Plans are in the works for a display booth at an upcoming HAZMAT conference.

The next IMPD meeting will be on March 10 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the MACo offices, 2715 Skyview Drive, in Helena.

Central Consortium Meeting

By Dan Sullivan dsullivan@mt.gov

The Central Montana Interoperability Communications Consortium (CMICC) meeting was held Wed., Feb. 11 in Great Falls. Constance Taylor, Northrop Grumman, presented information about a "Remote Visual Assessment (RVA)" system that the U.S. Air Force (USAF) is installing to provide video feed from the missile fields to Maelstrom Air Force Base. The RVA Project is in need of tower space to install equipment that would provide video coverage of the missile fields around

central Montana. CMICC indicated that members will work cooperatively with the USAF, but issues such as tower loading, weather, and site access or leases will need to be resolved.

Under the Technical Committee Report, sites including the Centennial, Old John and Alaska Bench were discussed. Site access remains an issue. The group was asked to provide site information to Dorothy Gremaux. Dorothy also discussed the necessity of obtaining background checks for contractors.

Cheri Kilby gave the IM Project Directors (IMPD) report, and told the group about the selection of the new Autovon site near Glendive for the location of the second master controller. She also discussed the status of the Sustainability Plan. Dave Clouse, Northrop Grumman, reported that the Northern Tier microwave is up and running and in the final stages of testing.

Cheri Kilby announced fleet mapping training dates, and Dorothy said that later dates would better to accommodate schedules. Cheri said that Dave McPherson, I-15/90 Corridor Project Director, is taking on the chairmanship of the Fleet Mapping and Business Practices Committee because Cindy Mullaney has resigned. She also announced that Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, is performing a needs assessment for mobile data terminals. In addition, Cheri gave an update on HB 10, EMPG and the Interoperability Montana grant requests that are pending through the Senior Advisory Council (SAC).

The group decided to continue meeting the day after the IMPD meeting, but decided to rotate the meeting location. The next meeting of CMICC will be in Lewistown on March 11.

Upcoming Meetings

Feb. 19

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am
Butte-Silver Bow Chamber • 1000 George St.

Feb. 23

IM Technical Committee Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
National Guard Helena Armed Forces Reserve Center
(HAFRC) (formerly the Stark Armory)
Corner of Euclid Ave & W. Lyndale Ave.

Feb. 24

Western Consortium (WICC)
Missoula • 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
County Courthouse, 200 W. Broadway, DES Office

Feb. 24

Big Sky 11 Consortium
Billings • Technical Committee: 8:30 - 10:00 am
Consortium: 10:00 am - noon
Billings Fire Station #1/EOC - 2300 9th Ave N.

Feb. 25

Eastern Tier (ETIC)
Glendive • 10:00 am • Dawson County Courthouse
Community Room, 207 W. Bell